

Amendments to the Claims:

Claims 1-51 are pending in this application. Claims 31-51 are withdrawn from consideration. Among the remaining claims 1-30, claims 1, 15 and 29 are independent. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A distributed system having a server device provided connected with, through a communication network, a plurality of user terminal devices each having means for image-taking means, means for user status recognition and means for displaying means, and a server device connected with said plurality of user terminal devices through communication lines, the server comprising:

~~user status recognition means for recognizing the status of user in use of said terminal devices per user terminal device; and~~

~~control means for controlling the display of user status on the other user terminal devices for said displaying means per user terminal device;~~

~~wherein when the pictorial image of a user image taken by image taking means of the other user terminal device is displayed on one of the user terminal devices among each of said user terminal devices, said control means works out the interuser distance between said one of user terminal devices and said other user terminal device, and controls the display of the pictorial image of the user on said other user terminal device for said displaying means of said one of user terminal devices in accordance with said interuser distance thus worked out~~

first receiving means for receiving status information of a first user including a pictorial image of the first user from a first one of the plurality of user terminal devices;

second receiving means for receiving a request of a second user requesting the

pictorial image of the first user from a second one of the plurality of user terminal devices;

determining means for determining an interuser distance between the first one of the plurality of user terminal devices and the second one of the plurality of user terminal devices based on a predetermined rule;

processing means for processing the pictorial image of the first user based on the interuser distance determined at said determining means; and

transmitting means for transmitting the pictorial image of the first user processed at said processing means to the second one of the plurality of user terminal devices.

2 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A distributed system according to claim 1, wherein each of said user terminal devices is set within an organization having plural places of duty, and the interuser distance ~~between one of said user terminal devices and said other user terminal device~~ is a distance in terms of said organization.

3 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A distributed system according to claim 1, wherein said interuser distance is ~~the~~ a physical distance between said one of user terminal devices and said other user terminal device the first one of the plurality of user terminal devices and the second one of the plurality of user terminal devices.

4 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A distributed system according to claim 1, wherein each of said plurality of user terminal devices is set within a virtual space, and said interuser distance ~~between said one of user terminal devices and said other user terminal device~~ is a distance in terms of said virtual space.

5 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A distributed system according to claim 1, wherein ~~when the pictorial image of a user image taken by image-taking means of the other user terminal device is displayed on one of the user terminal devices among each of said user terminal devices, said control means works out the interuser distance between said one of user terminal devices and said other user terminal device corresponding to the clarity of pictorial image of the user image taken by image-taking means of said one of user terminal devices~~ said processing means includes filtering means for filtering the pictorial image of the first user based on the interuser distance.

6 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A distributed system according to claim 5, wherein said interuser distance is ~~worked out~~ determined to be smaller as the clarity of the pictorial image of the first user ~~image taken by image-taking means of said one of user terminal devices of said~~ user becomes higher.

7-8 (CANCELLED):

9 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A distributed system according to claim ~~[[8]]~~ 5, wherein said filtering ~~process means~~ is configured to perform a process using one of image treatment processes including a mosaic treatment[[,]] and a gradation treatment, or the like.

10 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A distributed system according to claim ~~[[8]]~~ 5, wherein the intensity of said filtering ~~process~~ at said filtering means becomes ~~higher~~ increased as said interuser distance becomes ~~greater~~ increased.

11 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A distributed system according to claim 1, wherein said

means for user status recognition ~~means~~ comprises means for input status recognition ~~means~~ for recognizing the status of input from each user of said plurality of user terminal devices; means for terminal operating status recognition ~~means~~ for recognizing the operating status of each of said plurality of user terminal devices; and means for image recognition ~~means~~ for recognizing the pictorial image of the first user ~~[[image-]]~~ taken by means for image-taking ~~means~~ of each of said plurality of user terminal devices, and said distributed system further comprising means for control ~~means changes~~ for changing said interuser distance in accordance with ~~the~~ user status of ~~said one of user terminal devices~~ obtained by at least one ~~combination or more of the result of~~ ~~each recognition given by~~ said means for input status recognition ~~means~~, said means for terminal operating status recognition ~~means~~, and said means for image recognition ~~means~~.

12 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A distributed system according to claim ~~[[1]]~~ 11, further comprising: means for designated interuser distance input ~~means~~ for inputting a designated interuser distance by ~~the~~ a user operation, wherein said means for control ~~means~~ controls said interuser distance to turn into said designated interuser distance when said designated interuser distance is inputted by said means for designated interuser distance input ~~means~~.

13 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A distributed system according to claim ~~[[1]]~~ 11, wherein said user status recognition means is provided either for said user terminal device or said server device.

14 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A distributed system according to claim ~~[[1]]~~ 11, wherein said control means is provided either for said user terminal device or said server device.

15 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A method for controlling a pictorial image of a first user in a distributed system having a server device connected with, through a communication network,
~~the display of a distributed system provided with a plurality of user terminal devices each having~~
means for image-taking means, means for user status recognition and means for displaying
~~means, and a server device connected with said plurality of user terminal devices through~~
~~communication lines, the method~~ comprising the following steps of:

~~recognizing the status of user in use of said terminal devices per user terminal~~
~~device;~~

~~displaying the user status of the other user terminal device on said displaying~~
~~means per user terminal device; and~~

~~working out the interuser distance between said one of user terminal devices and~~
~~said other user terminal device when the pictorial image of the user image taken by image-taking~~
~~means of the other user terminal device is displayed on displaying means of said one of user~~
~~terminal devices among each of said user terminal devices, and controlling the display of the~~
~~pictorial image of user of said other user terminal devices for said displaying means of said one~~
~~of user terminal devices in accordance with said interuser distance thus worked out~~

receiving status information of the first user including the pictorial image of the
first user from a first one of the plurality of user terminal devices;

receiving a request of a second user requesting the pictorial image of the first user
from a second one of the plurality of user terminal devices;

determining an interuser distance between the first one of the plurality of user
terminal devices and the second one of the plurality of user terminal devices based on a

predetermined rule;

processing the pictorial image of the first user based on the interuser distance

determined at said determining step; and

transmitting the pictorial image of the first user processed at said processing step

to the second one of the plurality of user terminal devices.

16 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A method for controlling ~~the display of a distributed system~~
a pictorial image of a first user in a distributed system according to claim 15, wherein each of
said user terminal devices is set within an organization having plural places of duty, and the
interuser distance ~~between one of said user terminal devices and said other user terminal device~~
is a distance in terms of said organization.

17 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A method for controlling ~~the display of a distributed system~~
a pictorial image of a first user in a distributed system according to claim 15, wherein said
interuser distance is a physical distance between ~~said one of user terminal devices and said other~~
~~user terminal device~~ the first one of the plurality of user terminal devices and the second one of
the plurality of user terminal devices.

18 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A method for controlling ~~the display of a distributed system~~
a pictorial image of a first user in a distributed system according to claim 15, wherein each of
said plurality of user terminal devices is set within a virtual space, and said interuser distance
~~between said one of user terminal devices and said other user terminal device~~ is a distance in
terms of said virtual space.

19 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A method for controlling ~~the display of a distributed system~~ a pictorial image of a first user in a distributed system according to claim 15, wherein ~~when the pictorial image of a user image taken by image taking means of the other user terminal device is displayed on one of the user terminal devices among each of said user terminal devices, the interuser distance between said one of user terminal devices and said other user terminal device is worked out in said controlling step corresponding to the clarity of pictorial image of the user image taken by image taking means of said one of user terminal devices~~ said processing step includes filtering step for filtering the pictorial image of the first user based on the interuser distance.

20 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A method for controlling ~~the display of a distributed system~~ a pictorial image of a first user in a distributed system according to claim 19, wherein said interuser distance is ~~worked out~~ determined to be ~~smaller~~ decreased as the clarity of the pictorial image of the first user ~~image taken by image taking means of said one of user terminal devices~~ of said user becomes higher increased.

21-22 (CANCELLED):

23 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A method for controlling ~~the display of a distributed system~~ a pictorial image of a first user in a distributed system according to claim ~~[[22]]~~ 19, wherein said filtering ~~process~~ step is configured to perform a process using one of image treatment processes including a mosaic treatment[[,]] and a gradation treatment,~~or the like.~~

24 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A method for controlling ~~the display of a distributed system~~

a pictorial image of a first user in a distributed system according to claim ~~[[22]]~~ 19, wherein the intensity of the filtering process at said filtering ~~process~~ step becomes ~~higher~~ increased as said interuser distance becomes ~~greater~~ increased.

25 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A method for controlling ~~the display of a distributed system~~ a pictorial image of a first user in a distributed system according to claim 15, comprising the following steps of:

recognizing the status of input from each user of said plurality of user terminal devices;

recognizing the operating status of each user of said plurality of user terminal devices;

recognizing the pictorial image of the first user ~~[[image-]]~~ taken by image-taking means of each of said plurality of user terminal devices; and

changing said interuser distance in accordance with the user status obtained by at least one ~~result~~ of recognition given by the input status of each user, the operating status of each user terminal device, and the ~~user~~ pictorial image ~~image~~ ~~[[-]]~~ of the first user taken by each image-taking means.

26 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A method for controlling ~~the display of a distributed system~~ a pictorial image of a first user in a distributed system according to claim ~~[[15]]~~ 25, further comprising the following step of: inputting a designated interuser distance by the user operation, wherein when said designated interuser distance is inputted, the interuser distance between said one of user terminal devices and said other user terminal device is controlled to be turned into

said designated interuser distance.

27 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A method for controlling ~~the display of a distributed system~~ a pictorial image of a first user in a distributed system according to claim ~~[[15]]~~ 25, wherein said user status recognition is given either by said user terminal device or said server device.

28 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A method for controlling ~~the display of a distributed system~~ a pictorial image of a first user in a distributed system according to claim ~~[[15]]~~ 25, wherein said ~~control~~ changing step is executed either by said user terminal device or said server device.

29 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A computer readable storage medium having a program readable by a computer for structuring a distributed system ~~by use of~~ having a server device connected with, through a communication network, a plurality of user terminal devices each having image-taking means, user status recognition means and displaying means, ~~and a server device connected with said plurality of user terminal devices through communication lines,~~ wherein said program is ~~provided with user status recognition module for recognizing the status of user in use of said terminal devices per user terminal device; and control module for controlling the display of the user status on the other user terminal devices for said displaying means per user terminal device, and when the pictorial image of a user image taken by image-taking means of the other user terminal device is displayed on one of the user terminal devices among each of said user terminal devices, said control module works out the interuser distance between said one of user terminal devices and said other user terminal device, and controls the display of the pictorial image of the user on said other user terminal device for said displaying~~

~~means of said one of user terminal devices in accordance with said interuser distance thus~~
~~worked out~~ configured to perform:

receiving status information of the first user including the pictorial image of the
first user from a first one of the plurality of user terminal devices;

receiving a request of a second user requesting the pictorial image of the first user
from a second one of the plurality of user terminal devices;

determining an interuser distance between the first one of the plurality of user
terminal devices and the second one of the plurality of user terminal devices based on a
predetermined rule;

processing the pictorial image of the first user based on the interuser distance
determined at said determining step; and

transmitting the pictorial image of the first user processed at said processing step
to the second one of the plurality of user terminal devices.

30 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A computer readable storage medium according to claim 29,
wherein said user status recognition ~~module~~ means comprises input status recognition module for
recognizing the status of input from each user of said plurality of user terminal devices; terminal
operating status recognition module for recognizing the operating status of each of said plurality
of user terminal devices; and image recognition module for recognizing the pictorial image of the
user ~~[[image-]]~~ taken by image-taking means of each of said plurality of user terminal devices,
and said ~~controlling module changes~~ program is further configured to change said interuser
distance in accordance with the user status ~~of said one of user terminal devices~~ obtained by at

~~least one combination or more of the result of each recognition given by~~ said input status recognition module, said terminal operating status recognition module, and said image recognition module.

31 (WITHDRAWN): A sever device connected with a plurality of user terminal devices through communication lines, comprising: storage medium for storing the information for designating a plurality of virtual spaces to enable a user to reside therein, and the information for designating one specific virtual space among a plurality of virtual spaces to be set by said user; signal receiving means for receiving the user information to be transmitted from one of said plurality of user terminal devices; first signal distributing means for distributing the user information received by said signal receiving means to the other user terminal devices positioned in said specific virtual space set by the user of the user terminal device on the transmitting side of said user information; and second signal distributing means for distributing the user information received by said signal receiving means to the other user terminal devices positioned in the virtual space other than said specific virtual space among a plurality of virtual spaces to enable the user of the user terminal device on the transmitted side of said user information to reside therein.

32 (WITHDRAWN): A server device according to claim 31, wherein said second signal distributing means distributes signals to the user terminal devices positioned in the virtual space other than said specific virtual space after the execution of a designated conversion of the user information received by said signal receiving means.

33 (WITHDRAWN): A server device according to claim 32, wherein said user information contains the pictorial image data regarding the user.

34 (WITHDRAWN): A server device according to claim 33, wherein said designated conversion is a conversion in order to curtail the amount of information of said pictorial image data.

35 (WITHDRAWN): A server device according to claim 31; wherein said user information contains message data prepared by the user arbitrarily.

36 (WITHDRAWN): A server device according to claim 32, wherein the user of the user terminal device on the transmitting side of said user information can designate the execution of the converted contents of said designated conversion by said second signal distributing means.

37 (WITHDRAWN): A server device according to claim 36, wherein said designation is made individually per virtual space other than said specific virtual space.

38 (WITHDRAWN): A user terminal device connected with a server device through communication line, comprising: first signal transmitting means for transmitting to said server device the information for designating one specific virtual space set by said user among a plurality of virtual spaces for the user to reside therein; acquiring means for acquiring the user information regarding said user; second signal transmitting means for transmitting to said server device the user information acquired by said acquiring means; and reception display means for receiving and displaying the other user information distributed by said server device.

39 (WITHDRAWN): A user terminal device according to claim 38, wherein said reception

display means executes the designated conversion of the user information distributed from said server device for display in accordance with the instructions from said server device.

40 (WITHDRAWN): A virtual space system formed by a plurality of user terminal devices, and a server device connected with said plurality of user terminal devices through communication lines for structuring virtual spaces on a network comprising: first signal transmitting means provided for each of the user terminal devices for transmitting to said server device the information for designating the one specific virtual space set by said user among a plurality of virtual spaces for enabling the corresponding user to reside therein; acquiring means provided for each of the user terminal devices for acquiring the user information regarding the corresponding user; second signal transmitting means provided for each of the user terminal devices for transmitting to said server device the user information acquired by corresponding acquiring means among said acquiring means; storage means provided for said server device to store the information for designating a plurality of virtual spaces for a user to reside therein, and the information for designating said specific virtual space transmitted by said first transmitting means; signal receiving means provided for said server device to receive the user information transmitted from said second transmitting means of said plurality of user terminal devices; first signal distributing means provided for said server device to distribute the user information received by said signal receiving means to the other user terminal devices positioned in said specific virtual space set by the user of the user terminal device on the transmitting side of said user information; second signal distributing means provided for said server device to distribute the user information received by said signal receiving means to the other user terminal device

positioned in the virtual space other than said specific virtual space among a plurality of virtual spaces for enabling the user of the user terminal device on the transmitting side of said user information to reside therein; and reception display means provided for each of the user terminal devices to receive and display the other user information distributed by said first signal distributing means or said second signal distributing means.

41 (WITHDRAWN): A virtual space system according to claim 40, wherein said second signal distributing means distributes to the user terminal devices positioned in the virtual space other than said specific virtual space the user information received by said signal receiving means after the execution of designated conversion thereof.

42 (WITHDRAWN): A method for distributing user information applicable to the server device connected with a plurality of user terminal devices through communication lines comprising the following steps of: storing the information to designate a plurality of virtual space for enabling the user to reside therein, and the information to designate the specific one of said plurality of virtual spaces set by said user; receiving signals of the user information transmitted from said plurality of user terminal devices; distributing firstly the signals of the user information received in said signal receiving step to the other user terminal device positioned in said designated virtual space set by the user of the terminal device on the transmitting side of said user information; and distributing secondly the signals of the user information received in said signal receiving step to the other user terminal device positioned in the virtual space other than said designated virtual space among a plurality of virtual spaces for enabling the user of the terminal device on the transmitting side of said user information to reside therein.

43 (WITHDRAWN): A method for distributing user information according to claim 42, wherein the designated conversion is executed in the second signal distributing step for the user information received in said signal receiving step, and after that, the distribution is made to the user terminal devices positioned in the virtual space other than said specific virtual space.

44 (WITHDRAWN): A method for displaying user information applicable to the user terminal devices connected with a server device through communication lines, comprising the following steps of: transmitting firstly the information for designating one specific virtual space set by a user among a plurality of virtual spaces to enable the user to reside therein; acquiring the user information regarding said user; transmitting secondly the user information acquired in said acquiring step to the server device; and receiving and displaying the information of other users distributed from said server device.

45 (WITHDRAWN): A method for distributing and displaying user information applicable to a virtual space system formed by a plurality of user terminal devices and a server device connected with said plurality of user terminal device through communication lines for structuring virtual spaces within a network, comprising the following: a first signal transmitting step for each terminal device to transmit to said server device the information for designating one specific virtual space set by a user concerned among a plurality of virtual spaces to enable the corresponding user to reside therein; an acquiring step for each user terminal device to acquire user information regarding the corresponding user; a second transmitting step for each user terminal device to transmit the user information acquired in said acquiring step to said server device; a storing step for said server device to store the information for designating a plurality of

virtual spaces to enable a user to reside therein, and the information for designating said specific virtual space transmitted in said first signal transmitting step; a signal receiving step for said server device to receive the user information transmitted from said plurality of user terminal devices in said second transmitting step; a first signal distributing step for said server device to distribute the user information received in said signal receiving step to the other user terminal devices positioned in said specific virtual space set by the user of the user terminal device on the transmitting side of said user information; a second signal distributing step for said server device to distribute the user information received in said signal receiving step to the other user terminal devices positioned in the virtual space other than said specific space among a plurality of virtual spaces for enabling the user of the user terminal device on the transmitting side of said user information to reside therein; and a receiving and displaying step for each user terminal device to receive and display the information of other user distributed in said first signal distributing step or said second signal distributing step.

46 (WITHDRAWN): A method for distributing and displaying user information according to claim 45, wherein said second signal distributing step executes the designated conversion for the user information received in said signal receiving step, and after that, makes the distribution thereof to the user terminal devices positioned in the virtual space other than said specific virtual space.

47 (WITHDRAWN): A storage medium readable by a computer for storing a method for distributing user information as a program applicable to the server device connected with a plurality of user terminal device through communication lines, wherein said method for

distributing user information comprises: a storing step for storing the information for designating a plurality of virtual spaces for enabling a user to reside therein, and the information for designating the specific one virtual space set by said user among said plurality of virtual spaces; a signal receiving step to receive the user information transmitted from said plurality of user terminal devices; a first signal distributing step to distribute the user information received in said signal receiving step to the other user terminal devices positioned in said specific virtual space set by the user of the user terminal device on the transmitting side of said user information; and a second signal distributing step to distribute the user information received in said signal receiving step to the other user terminal devices positioned in the virtual space other than said specific virtual space among a plurality of virtual spaces for enabling the user of the user terminal device on the transmitting side of said user information to reside therein.

48 (WITHDRAWN): A storage medium according to claim 47, wherein said second signal distributing step executes the designated conversion for the user information received in said signal receiving step, and after that, the distribution thereof is made to the user terminal devices positioned in the virtual space other than said specific virtual space.

49 (WITHDRAWN): A storage medium readable by a computer for storing a method for displaying user information as a program applicable to the user terminal devices connected with a server device through communication lines, wherein said method for displaying user information comprises: a first signal transmitting step for each user terminal device to transmit to said server device the information for designating the specific one virtual space set by a user concerned among a plurality of virtual space for enabling said user to reside therein; an acquiring

step for acquiring the user information regarding said user; a second signal transmitting step for transmitting the user information acquired in said acquiring step to said server device; and a displaying step for receiving and displaying the other user information distributed from said server device.

50 (WITHDRAWN): A storage medium readable by a computer for storing a method for distributing and displaying user information as a program applicable to the user terminal devices connected with a server device through communication lines, wherein said method for distributing and displaying user information comprises: a first signal transmitting step for transmitting to said server device the information for designating the specific one virtual space set by a user concerned among a plurality of virtual space for enabling said user to reside therein; an acquiring step for each user terminal device to acquire the user information regarding said user; a second signal transmitting step for each user terminal device to transmit to said server device the user information acquired in said acquiring step to said server device; and a storing step for said server device to store the information for designating a plurality of virtual spaces enabling the user to reside therein, and the information for designating said specific virtual space transmitted in said first signal transmitting step; a signal receiving step for said server device to receive the user information transmitted from said plurality of user terminal devices in said second transmitting step; a first signal distributing step for said server device to distribute the user information received in said signal receiving step to the other user terminal devices positioned in said specific virtual space set by the user of user terminal device on the transmitting side of said user information; a second signal distributing step for said server device to distribute

the user information received in said signal receiving step to the other user terminal devices positioned in the virtual space other than said specific virtual space among a plurality of virtual spaces for enabling the user of the user terminal device on the transmitting side of said user information; and a receiving and displaying step for each terminal device to receive and display the other user information distributed in said first signal distributing step or said second signal distributing step.

51 (WITHDRAWN): A storage medium according to claim 50, wherein said second signal distributing step executes the designated conversion of the other user information received in said signal receiving step, and after that, the distribution thereof is made to the user terminal devices positioned in the virtual space other than said specific virtual device. a displaying step for receiving and displaying the other user information distributed from said server device.